



AMERICAN CLASSICS



SONGS OF PEACE AND PRAISE

Choral Music from Queens College

Weisgall • Brings • Mandelbaum • Smaldone
Sheng • Schober • Saylor • Kraft

The New York Virtuoso Singers
Harold Rosenbaum

Queens College Choir and Vocal Ensemble
Bright Sheng • James John

SONGS OF PEACE AND PRAISE

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Allen Brings (b. 1934)		9 Sanctus	1:03
2 In paradisum (1957)	3:15	10 Benedictus	1:30
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3 The Village – Act 1, Finale (1995)	4:53	12 Adam in Eden (2003)	1:56
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(Choral preparation: James John)

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Songs of Peace and Praise

Choral Music from Queens College

The choral music on this recording represents a group of composers who are or were at one time faculty members of the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, CUNY. It was conceived as a vehicle to celebrate the long history of composers associated with the school, through the vocal excellence of the incomparable New York Virtuoso Singers, and the vibrant talents of the students in the Queens College Choir and Vocal Ensemble. A somewhat larger selection of works was performed in April 2015 at Merkin Hall in NYC, and all were recorded in the LeFrak Concert Hall at the Aaron Copland School of Music.

As the recording came together, the assembled pieces seemed to gather around the concept of “Songs of Peace and Praise.” The languages (Hebrew, Latin, Italian, English, Chinese) and poetry represent a group of far flung aesthetics, but taken as a whole, they share a surprisingly concise intention. Three of the works (Weisgall, Brings, Saylor) speak directly to praise; one (Mandelbaum) invokes a direct call for peace, and the others (Smaldone, Sheng, Schober and Kraft) evoke a celebration of the peace that the world offers. Taken as a whole, these works pay tribute to the special nature of the shared experience of the glorious world we all inhabit and a hope that we can share it and live in it together for a long time.

As artists and musicians, all of us who contributed to this recording therefore dedicate this music to the continuing celebration of peace and praise.

Hugo Weisgall (1912–1997)

Opera composer Hugo Weisgall's output includes orchestral, chamber and choral works, eight major song cycles, and music for ballet. Born in Czechoslovakia, he came to the US in 1920 with his parents. During the Second World War, he was assistant military attaché to the governments-in-exile in London, and later served as cultural attaché in Prague.

His work was recognized by the Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim

Foundation. He twice served as composer-in-residence at the American Academy in Rome, was president of the American Music Center for ten years, and also served as president of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Weisgall is a former director of the composer-in-residence program for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and was professor of music at Queens College from 1961 to 1983.

Weisgall's *God is due praise (Ki lo noeh)* is a musical setting of one of the hymns traditionally sung by Ashkenazi Jews at the conclusion of the Passover Seder. This poem is from an anonymous medieval source, but can be traced back to the 13th century. The tune Weisgall uses as the basis for this choral work was a favorite at his family Seders.

The transliteration of this particular text corresponds to the Ashkenazi pronunciation, which was common among Eastern European Jews, which was the particular heritage of Professor Weisgall.

1 God is due praise (Ki lo noeh)

Ki lo no'eh. Ki lo yo'eh

Adir bim'lucho. Bochur kahalucho.

G'dudov yom'ru lo.

L'cho ul'cho. L'cho ki l'cho. L'cho af l'cho.

L'cha adonoy hamam'locho.

Ki lo no'eh. Ki lo yo'eh.

Dogul bim'lucho. Hodur kahaloch.

Vosikov yom'ru lo.

L'cho ul'cho. L'cho ki l'cho. L'cho af l'cho.

L'cha Adonoy hamam'locho.

Ki lo no'eh. Ki lo yo'eh.

Zakay bim'lucho. Chosin kahaloch.

Taf strov yom'ru lo.

L'cho ul'cho. L'cho ki l'cho. L'cho af l'cho.

L'cho Adonoy hamam'locho.

Ki lo no'eh. Ki lo yo'eh.

Yochid bim'lucho. Kabir kahaloch.
Limudov yom'ru lo.
L'cho ul'cho. L'cho ki l'cho. L'cho af l'cho.
L'cho Adonoy hamam'locho.
Ki lo no'eh. Ki lo yo'eh.

Moshel bim'lucho. Noro kahaloch.

S'virov yom'ru lo.
L'cho ul'cho. L'cho Ki l'cho. L'cho af l'cho.
L'cho Adonoy hamam'l'cho.
Ki lo na'eh. Ki lo ya'eh.
Ki lo na'eh. Ki lo ya'eh.

Text: Anonymous

*[God is due praise. All of our days.
Our majestic king. Truly he is supreme.
To him the angels sing. To thee, Lord to thee,
And only to thee, to thee, yea to thee,
To thee the kingdom and the glory.
God is due praise. All of our days.]*

*Celebrated king. Truly he is enthroned.
To him the faithful sing. To thee, Lord to thee,
And only to thee, to thee, yea to thee,
To thee the kingdom and the glory,
God is due praise. All of our days.]*

*Pure and faithful king. Truly mighty is he.
To him his princes sing. To thee, Lord, to thee,
And only to thee, to thee, yea to thee,
To thee the kingdom and the glory,
God is due praise. All of our days.]*

*One and only king. Truly he is the power.
To him his people sing. To thee, Lord, to thee,
And only to thee, to thee, yea to thee,
To thee the kingdom and the glory.
God is due praise. All of our days.]*

Our sovereign king, truly he is revered.

*To him his subjects sing.
To thee, Lord, to thee, and only to thee,
To thee, yea to thee, to thee the kingdom and the glory.
God is due praise. All of our days.
God is due praise. All of our days.]*

Translation: Jules Harlow and Hugo Weisgall]

Allen Brings (b. 1934)

Allen Brings received a BA degree *magna cum laude* from Queens College, an MA from Columbia University, and a doctorate in theory and composition from Boston University. In 1962 he was a Naumburg Fellow at Princeton University, where he studied with Roger Sessions.

A pianist as well as a composer, Brings has performed in programs of music for piano four hands, with Genevieve Chinn, with whom he has recorded for Orion, CRI, and Centaur. He is also co-author of *A New Approach to Keyboard Harmony*, published by W.W. Norton.

Brings is professor emeritus of music at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, where he served on the music faculty from 1963 to 2002, and was coordinator of the theory and ear training program.

Brings' setting of the Latin funeral recessional, *In paradisum*, is a tender and moving interpretation of this traditional text. He writes:

My music has always had a strong expressive content which I have tried to convey by clarity of melodic line and phrase structure. I have always tried to reward the performers efforts by writing only as many notes as are necessary and only notes that will continually captivate the ear while urging it forward to the end of the piece. The overall impression which I think my music conveys is rather like the wave of an ocean rising and falling in intensity, while below, a strong current bears everything above it to a – not entirely unanticipated – but completely satisfying destination.

2 In paradisum

In paradisum deducant te Angeli,
In tuo adventu
Suscipiant te Martyres,
Et perducant te
In civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.
Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat,
Et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
Aeternam habeas requiem.

*[May angels lead you to Paradise eternal,
And when you appear,
May the blessed martyrs call your name,
So that you may find
Comfort and peace in Holy Jerusalem.
May the song of angels bring you endless joy,
And like Lazarus, who was once a pauper,
May you find eternal rest.]*

Translation: Joseph Machlis]

Joel Mandelbaum (b. 1932)

Joel Mandelbaum has been teaching at Queens College since 1961. He is professor emeritus at the college, and also served as department chair for seven years in the 1970s and early 1980s. His more than 120 compositions include two operas, sixteen song cycles, orchestral, choral and chamber works as well as several experimental microtonal pieces.

This excerpt is from his opera *The Village*, which was completed and performed in 1995. It consists of thirteen scenes, vignettes from life in a village in Normandy that protected a Jewish boy sent from Paris by his mother for his safety.

In this excerpt, a town meeting has been called by the Mayor to discuss the incipient arrival of German troops. Several villagers, aware that the boy staying in their midst is Jewish, suggest betraying him to the Germans to buy their goodwill. For a time it appears that some, out of fear, are ready to do this. Led by their Mayor, their Priest,

and ultimately by an impassioned plea from Mme. Bernaud, at whose house both David and the troops are staying, the villagers decide to keep David's identity a secret from the Germans. The villagers celebrate their shared act of goodness and the sense of community it has instilled. The scene begins where the Priest and the Mayor, sensing that Mme. Bernaud's pleas have convinced almost everyone, come forward to lead the villagers in their compact.

3 The Village (Act 1, Finale)

PRIEST
Mme. Bernaud is right. The boy is innocent. So let it be agreed, then, David is the nephew of Mme. Bernaud. We treat him as our own.
CHORUS
We treat him as our own.
MAYOR
Friends, this must be clear. The boy is not our enemy. As long as we embrace him, we're all safe.
CHORUS
As long as we embrace him –
We're all safe.
MAYOR
If we betray him, we betray ourselves.
CHORUS
If we betray him –
We betray ourselves.
MAMAN
As you are innocent you must defend him!
I ask the life of a child!
If you betray him you betray yourselves!
ALL
As we are innocent we must defend him.
Which one of us would tell?
(MAMAN: I ask the life of a child!)
As long as we embrace him we're all safe.
Who'd send a child to death?

(MAMAN: I ask justice!)
If we betray him
we betray ourselves.
The boy is one of us.
(MAMAN: The life of a child!)
He stays, as safe as any child we've borne.
As safe as any child we've borne!

Text: Susan Fox (b. 1943)

Edward Smaldone (b. 1956)

Edward Smaldone, who joined the Queens College faculty in 1989, is professor of music and was the director of the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, City University of New York from 2002 to 2016. He holds degrees from Queens College and a PhD from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Professor Smaldone is the recipient of awards such as the Goddard Lieberman Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as grants and awards from ASCAP, the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo Corporation, the Charles Ives Center for the Arts, the Percussive Arts Society, and the American Music Center. He was named "Composer of the Year" by the Classical Recording Foundation for 2016.

His music is recorded on the CRI, New World, Capstone, Ablaze, and Naxos labels. His latest recording *The Beauty of Innuendo* with the Brno Philharmonic, Mikel Toms conducting, was released on Ablaze Records in December 2014.

L'infinito was inspired by the beauty of the landscape of rolling hills outside Spoleto in summer 2013. The scene inspired an Italian colleague to quote the first line of Leopardi's poem, "*Sempre caro mi fu quest'ermo colle*" ("This lonely hill was always dear to me"). The poem provides a stunningly beautiful and complex metaphor for the Italian aesthetic: an appreciation of the simple beauty of a bucolic country scene, combined with a deep understanding of the immensity of the world in which one stands to contemplate such simple beauty. *L'infinito* is dedicated to Harold Rosenbaum and The New York Virtuoso Singers.

4 L'infinito

Sempre caro mi fu quest'ermo colle,
E questa siepe, che da tanta parte
Dell'ultimo orizzonte il guardo esclude.
Ma sedendo e mirando, interminati
Spazi di là da quella, e sovrumani
Silenzi, e profondissima quiete
Io nel pensier mi fingo; ove per poco
Il cor non si spaura. E come il vento
Odo stormir tra queste piante, io quello
Infinito silenzio a questa voce
Vo comparando: e mi sovvien l'eterno,
E le morte stagioni, e la presente
E viva, e il suon di lei. Così tra questa
Immensità s'annega il pensier mio:
E il naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare.

*Text: "Sempre caro mi fu quest'ermo colle"
by Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837)*

*[This lonely hill was always dear to me,
and this hedgerow, which cuts off the view
of so much of the last horizon.
But sitting here and gazing, I can see
beyond, in my mind's eye, unending spaces,
and superhuman silences, and depthless calm,
till what I feel
is almost fear. And when I hear
the wind stir in these branches, I begin
comparing that endless stillness with this noise;
and the eternal comes to mind,
and the dead seasons, and the present
living one, and how it sounds.
So my mind sinks in this immensity:
and foundering is sweet in such a sea.*

Translation: Jonathan Galassi

Bright Sheng (b. 1955)

Composer, conductor, pianist, educator and MacArthur Fellow Bright Sheng was born on 6 December 1955 in Shanghai, China, and moved to New York in 1982 when he earned an MA from Queens College. He is currently the Leonard Bernstein Distinguished University Professor at the University of Michigan, and Y.K. Pao Distinguished Visiting Professor at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

His opera *Dream of the Red Chamber* was commissioned and performed by the San Francisco Opera in 2016. His music is exclusively published by G. Schirmer, Inc. in New York City; his works recorded by Sony Classical, Decca, Naxos, Telarc, Delos, Koch International, New World and BIS.

Since 2011, he has been the founder and artistic director of The Intimacy of Creativity – The Bright Sheng Partnership: Composers Meet Performers in Hong Kong, an annual two-week workshop with a new approach to creativity.

Bright Sheng's *Two Folk Songs from Qinghai* was the centerpiece of the Queens College Choir's tour program and performance at the NYSSMA Conference in Rochester, New York, in December 2010, while he was a Visiting Distinguished Artist-in-Residence at the Aaron Copland School of Music in 2010. The first folksong in the set, entitled, *Morningstar Lily*, describes a man who climbs a mountain to retrieve a lily for his beloved. The second, *A Pair of Mules*, depicts a very difficult trip over the mountains from Qinghai to Ning-Xia, and the joy attained after completing such an arduous journey.

Two Folk Songs from Qinghai

5 I. Morningstar Lily

Shan Dan Dan Hua (Ya Kai Zai Ya Shong,
Gu Gu Nee Zhai Ha (Hei Ya Lee)
Mee Mee Nao (A Jou) Dei Shong Liao (Ya).
Shan Dan Dan Hua (Ya Kai Zai Ya Shong,
Mee Mee Yao Dei Shong (Hei Ya Lee)
Gu Gu Nao Zhai (A Jou) Zhai Ha.

*[The Morningstar Lily is in full bloom upon the cliff,
My love, I will wear it
If you bring it down.
The Morningstar Lily is in full bloom upon the cliff,
My love, if you wear it
I am bringing it down.]*

6 II. A Pair of Mules

Yee Dui Dee (Ma Jou) Lou Zi (Zhe)
Zou (Dee) Ning Xia (Yo),
Tuo (Ei) Yee Kun Ma (Yo),
Hui Lai Shi (Ma Jou) Shao Liao Dai
Zao (Ya Ha Jou) Er,
(Dian Dian Hua Er Kai Ya Yo).

*[Carrying a bundle of hemp,
A pair of mules are going to Ning-Xia,
When they are back,
They will bring a sack of jujube [Chinese dates].
[nonsense syllables]*

*Texts: Traditional Chinese
Translations: Bright Sheng]*

David Schober (b. 1974)

As an undergraduate at the Oberlin Conservatory, David Schober received a Theodore Presser Foundation grant to study history, language, and traditional arts at Yonsei University in South Korea. Recognition for his composition work includes a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Aaron Copland Award, the Wayne Peterson Composition Prize, and awards from BMI and ASCAP. He has received commissions from the Minnesota Orchestra, the Naumburg Foundation (for the Miró String Quartet), and the Fromm Foundation. His concerto *Split Horizon* was premiered at Carnegie Hall by the sextet Eighth Blackbird and the American Composers Orchestra. He is also the author of an analytical study of piano music by the late George Perle, a longtime professor at the City University of New York. He was an artist fellow at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France in 2010, and has been a member of the music faculty at Queens College since 2004. He was named director of the School of Music in 2016.

Schober's *Curiosity* was inspired by the philosophy and writings of Albert Einstein. Schober writes:

Above all, he [Einstein] embraced the beauty and grandeur of the universe: vast beyond human comprehension, but at the same time approachable through rational inquiry. *Curiosity* is my effort to capture a glimpse of this delicate paradox. Einstein was an accomplished amateur musician and spoke of scientific "creativity" much as he spoke of music. I find the timbre of choral voices and harp to be a perfect mirror to Einstein's reflections on the mysterious.

7 Curiosity

The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious.

The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.

One cannot help but be in awe when one contemplates the mysteries of eternity.

Of life, of the marvelous structure of reality.

It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day.

Text: Albert Einstein (1879–1955)

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14 All Creation Sings Praise

Praise to God from the heavens,
Praise to God in the heights!
Praise to God all you angels,
Praise to God, all you heavenly hosts!
Alleluia! Praise God, sun and moon!
Alleluia! Praise God, earth and sea!
Alleluia! Praise God, all you shining stars!
Praise God, you highest heavens and deepest waters.

Let all creatures sing praises to God,
They were created at God's command;
Birds and animals through all the earth
All the fish in the depths of the sea!
Alleluia! Praise God, all you mountains and hills!
Alleluia! Praise God, forest and plain!
Fire and hail! Snow and mist!
Even the storm winds obey your command!
Let the rulers of earth and all people
All the judges of the lands,
Men and women, young and old,
children too, sing praises to God!

Praise to you in your sanctuary!
Praise to you from the ends of the earth!
Praise to you for your mighty creation!
Praise to you for your majesty!
Alleluia! Praise God with trumpet and harp!
Alleluia! Praise God with strings and flute!
Alleluia! Praise God with timbrel and dance!
Alleluia! Praise God with cymbal and drum!
Alleluia! Let everything that has breath praise God!
Alleluia! Amen!

Text: Psalms 148 and 150 (paraphrased)

15 O day full of grace

O day full of grace, O blessed time;
O day full of grace that now we see appearing
on earth's horizon,
Bring light from our God that we may be replete
in his joy this season.
God, shine for us now in this dark place;
your name on our hearts emblazon.

O day full of grace that now we see our Lord
on the earth arriving;
Then came to the world that light sublime,
great joy for us all retrieving;
For Jesus all mortals did embrace,
all darkness and shame dispelling.

When we on that final journey go
that Christ is for us preparing,
We'll gather in song, our hearts aglow,
all joy of the heavens sharing,
And walk in the light of God's own place,
with angels his name adoring.
Amen.

*Text: Nikolai F.S. Grundtvig (1783–1872),
Translation: Gerald Thorson (1921–2001)
(Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1978)*

Bruce Saylor (b. 1946)

Bruce Saylor earned degrees from The Juilliard School and a PhD from the CUNY Graduate Center. He also studied at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. His four operas include *Orpheus Descending* after Tennessee Williams, and *The Image Maker* after James Merrill. He has provided scores for important national occasions and religious events, among them President Clinton's second inauguration and the papal visits of John Paul II and Benedict XVI. He has also worked extensively with American soprano Jessye Norman, including her two best-selling holiday CDs and her "Sacred Ellington" concert which has toured the world. Among Saylor's awards are the Guggenheim, Fulbright, Mellon, the Ives Scholarship and the Music Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the National Composition Prize from the National Society of Arts and Letters, and a major award for composition from the Ingram Merrill Foundation. Bruce Saylor is professor of music, having joined the Queens College music faculty in 1978.

Saylor's *Missa Constantiae* (a *Missa brevis* without Gloria or Credo) was written in Umbria in 2007, for a special communion celebrated in an ancient church by Jonathan Boardman, Chaplain of All Saints Anglican Church in Rome. Saylor revised the music a year later for Mollie Nichols, director of music at the Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York. A hidden tribute to his wife Constance is the main tune of the *Agnus Dei*: it is built on a *soggetto cavato* derived from the letters of her name.

Saylor was invited to set the main Marian devotional prayer *Ave Maria* 13 by the Campion Quartet, an English group based in Rome, specifically for an ecumenical prayer service at the church of St. Gregory the Great, Rome in March of 2001. The harmonic and melodic substance was tailored deliberately for that occasion and for that church's splendid resonance. Since then the motet has been recorded and taken on tour by the Harvard University Choir and by members of the Queens College Choir and Vocal Ensemble.

Missa Constantiae

8 Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

*[Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.]*

9 Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:
Pleni sunt coeli et terra Gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

*[Glory, Glory, Glory,
Lord God of Hosts:
Full are heaven and earth of thy glory.
Hosanna in highest.]*

10 Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

*[Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in highest.]*

11 Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tolis peccata mundi,
Miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tolis peccata mundi,
Dona nobis pacem.

*[Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world,
Grant us peace.]*

12 Ave Maria

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

*[Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and in the hour of our death. Amen.]*

Leo Kraft (1922–2014)

Born in Brooklyn, NY in 1922, Leo Kraft attended Queens College and Princeton University, and studied composition with Karol Rathaus, Randall Thompson, and Nadia Boulanger. Kraft later returned to Queens College, where he served a long tenure as a respected faculty member of the Aaron Copland School of Music from 1947 to 1989. He was a founding member of the College Music Society, served as president of the American Music Center, and was also an active member of the Society of Composers, Inc., the Society for Music Theory, and the League of Composers/International Society for Contemporary Music. A member of ASCAP, Kraft was a prolific composer to the end in his 92nd year.

Leo Kraft wrote *Adam in Eden* in 2003, the first year that Professor James John was appointed conductor of the College Choir and Vocal Ensemble. It was inspired by the Queens College Choral Society's performance of Haydn's *The Creation* in May 2003.

12 Adam in Eden

Adam, Adam! A-walking in the garden,
A-walking in the Springtime morning,
Walking in the dew of the first morning, looks on the animals,
The newly made creatures, as new to him as he was new.
Opens up his eyes, wide open!
To see the wonder of the brave new world.
He looks and stares and does exclaim:
Lion! Tiger! Zebra! Elephant!
And only Adam knows their name.

First man on earth, Adam looks about him,
Seeing all the splendors of the garden,
Fill'd with awe and wonder is he,
Such marvelous beauty for to see.
Ah! Adam, walking, a-walking in the Springtime garden,
All the wonders to perceive,
Staring, trembling, man of Eden,
Lion! Tiger! Zebra! Elephant!
Ah, Oh, Eve!

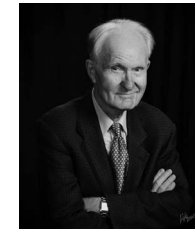
Text: Leo Kraft



Hugo Weisgall



Joel Mandelbaum



Allen Brings



Edward Smaldone
Photo: Tina Gutierrez



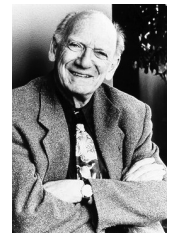
Bright Sheng
Photo: Peter Shin



David Schober
Photo: Nancy Bareis



Bruce Saylor
Photo: Anthony Morgan



Leo Kraft

Members of The New York Virtuoso Singers 1-4

Soprano

Eliza Bagg
Sarah Griffiths
Melissa Kelley
Yungee Rhie
Ellen Taylor Sisson

Alto

Katharine Emory
Mary Marathe
Julie Morgan
Suzanne Schwing

Tenor

Alex Guerrero
John Kawa
Mukund Marathe
Michael Steinberger

Bass

Blake Burroughs
James Gregory
Steven Moore
Stephen Morse
John Rose

Choral Contractor
Nancy Wertsch

Members of Queens College Choir 5-6

Soprano

Carissa Allen
Christina Guando
Anna Harmon
Jennifer Joungblood
Grace Kahl
Leah McClure
Katrina Montagna
Nora Mooney
Katie Morra
Jinxiang Yu

Alto

Hannah Amoako
Maria Basile
Nicholle Bittlingmeyer
Melisa Bonetti
Monika Haar
Katherine Pirozzi
Beatrice Söderberg
Cynthia Weinman

Tenor

Robert Ariza
David Burkard
Joe DeClara
Christian Gibbs
Sean Glenn
John Kelly
Douglas Sabo
Erick Urgiles
Pu Zheng

Bass

Francisco Grenald
Philip Kaplan
Joseph Martin
Sean Moonsammy
Prince Nyatanga
Emmanuel Sikora
Kyle Weekes

Members of Queens College Choir and Vocal Ensemble

Soprano

Jessica Altieri 13-15
Nathalie Escudero 7-12
Alessandra Gluf 7-11
Amy Guarino 7-11
Emily John 7-12
Angie Martinez 13-15
Nora Mooney 7-12
Kristin Scalice 13-15
Kristina Weglarz 7-15
Anna Wood 13-15
Jinxiang Yu 13-15

Alto

Jamie Carrillo 13-15
Linda Collazo 13-15
Robert Colon 13-15
Carla D'Amore 7-11
Emma Dong 13-15
Annmarie Errico 7-12
Kayla Faccilongo 7-11
Victoria Hernandez 7-12
Sunkyoung Lee 13-15
Shirley Mak 7-12
Alexandra Nicoletti 7-12
Sameena Tanedo 14-15

Tenor

David Burkard 7-12
Jin H. Byun 13-15**
Joseph DeClara 7-12
Christopher Emery 13-15
Nate Festinger 7-12
Joseph Franzino 7-11
Joseph Hill 13-15
Cortlandt Matthews 7-12
Andres Maldonado 13-15
Ben Muratore 13-15
Matthew Perez 13-15
Federico Zegarra 7-11 13-15

Bass

Robert Ariza 13-15
Jonathan Bley 13-15
Matthew Dineiro 7-12
Joshua Gurwitz 13-15
Cory Hecht 7-11
Neophytos Ioannou 7-11
Markus Kaitila 13-15
Alexander Roff 13-15
Todd Wachsman 13-15

**Queens College
Vocal Ensemble,
Assistant Conductor

Kathryn Wieckhorst



Photo: Joshua South

Kathryn Wieckhorst is a chorister/soloist with the choir at the Cathedral of Saint Patrick in Manhattan. She is also a member of Opera Collective, sings with The Salvatones, and has been a featured soloist at the Cathedral of Saint Patrick and a soloist with the Gemini Youth Orchestra, Queens Symphony Orchestra, the Nova Philharmonic, OperaOggi, and the Brooklyn Queens Conservatory Summer Opera Series. She earned her MA in Performance from Queens College in 2012, studying with Sherry Overholt, and also studied at Hofstra University with Tammy Hensrud.

Youn Ju Namkoong



Youn Ju Namkoong holds degrees in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Northwestern University and the Manhattan School of Music. She is on faculty at the Aaron Copland School of Music at CUNY Queens College and the Queens Summer Vocal Institute. She has collaborated with the Queens College Choral Society, the Queens Symphony Orchestra and has been on staff at the Aspen Opera Theater, Opera New Jersey, New York Lyric Opera, Tulsa Opera, and the Opera and Voice department at Rice University.

Emily John



Harpist Emily John has performed at Merkin Hall, Rose Theater (Jazz at Lincoln Center), Riverside Church, and Symphony Space, among others. She is also an active singer and conductor in the New York area. John serves on the adjunct faculties of Queens College and the Special Music School at the Kaufman Center and holds a degree from the Eastman School of Music. Her scholarly publications include a recent article on works for choir and harp in the *American Harp Journal*, a companion article, co-authored with her husband, James John in *Choral Journal* (ACDA) and "By the Book: An Annotated Bibliography of Music-Based Picture Books" in *General Music Today*.

Paul Kerekes



Paul Kerekes is a New York based pianist and composer. His music has been performed by many outstanding ensembles, some of which include the American Composers Orchestra and Da Capo Chamber Players, in such venues as Merkin Hall and (le) poisson rouge. Kerekes is also a co-founding member of Grand Band, a six piano ensemble, and Invisible Anatomy, a composer/performer ensemble, who have been featured at festivals across the United States and abroad, most notably Beijing's Modern Music Festival and the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival. He has received awards from ASCAP, the Academy of Arts and Letters, and was the recipient of the 2015 JFund award from the American Composer's Forum. Paul is a graduate of Queens College and the Yale School of Music and currently teaches at Sarah Lawrence College.

John A. Wolfe



John A. Wolfe is a doctor of musical arts candidate in organ performance at Rutgers University, holding a master's degree from the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, and a bachelor's degree from Vassar College. Wolfe is the organist and music director at the Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament in New Rochelle, NY, where he performs for upwards of 300 Masses per year. He is also the sub-dean of the American Guild of Organists Brooklyn Chapter, and a 2016 recipient of the Organ Historical Society's E. Power Biggs Fellowship.

The New York Virtuoso Singers



Founded in 1988 by conductor Harold Rosenbaum, The New York Virtuoso Singers (NYVS) has become America's leading exponent of contemporary choral music. Although the chorus performs music of all periods, its emphasis is on commissioning, performing and recording the music of American composers. NYVS has commissioned more than 80 works, sung in close to 450 premieres and appears on over 40 commercial recordings. It has won the prestigious ASCAP-Chorus America "Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music" four times.

The Queens College Choir

The Queens College Choir, conducted by James John, is a select ensemble of 35–40 music majors, and is the Aaron Copland School of Music's principal undergraduate choral organization. The group engages in a wide variety of performances throughout the academic year, including concerts of a cappella choral music, opera productions, and major works with orchestra. Recognized as one of the finest collegiate choirs in the region, the QC Choir has appeared in many of Manhattan's prestigious venues, including St. Patrick's Cathedral and Carnegie Hall.

The Queens College Vocal Ensemble



The Queens College Vocal Ensemble, conducted by James John, is a select chamber choir of 18–24 graduate students, faculty, and advanced undergraduate students, specializing in a cappella music from the Renaissance to the 21st century. In March 2009 the Vocal Ensemble released an album featuring the part-songs of Scottish composer Hamish MacCunn.

Harold Rosenbaum



Photo: Nan Melville

Harold Rosenbaum is the 2014 recipient of the Ditson Conductor's Award, established by Columbia University. He has commissioned 84 works and conducted over 500 world premieres. In 2011 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Queens College, his alma mater. He is editor of a newly established contemporary choral music series for Peermusic, and G. Schirmer publishes the *Harold Rosenbaum Choral Series*. He is an associate professor at the University at Buffalo/SUNY, directing the choirs and heading the graduate program in choral conducting.

James John



Photo: Sean Moonsammy

James John is professor of music and director of choral activities at the Aaron Copland School of Music, where he conducts the Queens College Choir, Vocal Ensemble and Choral Society, and heads the graduate program in choral conducting. Dr. John's choirs have been invited to perform at state and divisional conferences of the American Choral Directors Association, and his guest conducting appearances have included Avery Fisher Hall, Tokyo's Suntory Hall and Metropolitan Opera City Concert Hall, Long Island's Tilles Center, and the Virginia Chorale. He also serves as artistic director of the Manhattan-based vocal ensemble, Cerddorion.

Recorded: 6 December 2010 [5-6](#), 2 June 2015 [1-4](#) [7-12](#), 8 April 2017 [13-15](#)
at LeFrak Concert Hall, Queens College, New York, USA

Producer and editor: Adam Abeshouse [1-4](#) [7-12](#), Dahong Seetoo [5-6](#) [13-15](#)

Engineer: William Seigmund [1-4](#) [7-12](#), Dahong Seetoo [5-6](#) [13-15](#) • Mastering: Adam Abeshouse

Publishers: Theodore Presser [1](#); Mira Music [2](#); manuscript [3](#) [7](#) [12](#) [14](#) [15](#);
L.K. Music (ASCAP) [4](#); G. Schirmer, Inc. [5](#) [6](#); Paraclete Press [8-11](#) [13](#)

SONGS OF PEACE AND PRAISE

Choral Music from Queens College

- 1 **Hugo Weisgall (1912–1997):**
God is due praise (Ki lo noeh) (1958)* 2:34
- 2 **Allen Brings (b. 1934): In paradisum (1957)*** 3:15
- 3 **Joel Mandelbaum (b. 1932):**
The Village – Act 1, Finale (1995)* 4:53
- 4 **Edward Smaldone (b. 1956): L’infinito (2013)*** 10:11
- 5–6 **Bright Sheng (b. 1955):**
Two Folk Songs from Qinghai (1990) 10:34
- 7 **David Schober (b. 1974): Curiosity (2011)*** 5:30
- 8–11 **Bruce Saylor (b. 1946):**
Missa Constantiae (2007)* 7:10
- 12 **Leo Kraft (1922–2014):**
Adam in Eden (2002)* 1:56
- 13 **Bruce Saylor: Ave Maria (2001)*** 3:02
David Schober:
- 14 **All Creation Sings Praise (2009)*** 4:13
- 15 **O day full of grace (2006)*** 4:48

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

The New York Virtuoso Singers

Harold Rosenbaum

**Queens College Choir
and Vocal Ensemble**

Bright Sheng • James John

A detailed track list along with full artists’ and publishers’ details can be found inside the booklet. The sung texts are included in the booklet and can also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/559819
Booklet notes: Edward Smaldone
Cover photo by AlexSava (iStockphoto.com)



AMERICAN CLASSICS

This recording of choral works showcase a group of composers who are or were once faculty members of the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, CUNY. The widely differing languages and poetic aesthetics set by these composers represent the concept of “Songs of Peace and Praise,” from symbolic, descriptive pieces such as Bright Sheng’s *Two Folk Songs from Qinghai* to tender and moving interpretations of traditional texts such as Allen Brings’ *In paradisum*. The voices of The New York Virtuoso Singers and Queens College combine to express the universal nature of shared experience.

This recording was made possible with support from the City University of New York PSC–CUNY Research Award Program, the Maldeb Foundation, the Aaron Copland School of Music and The New York Virtuoso Singers.

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
58:06